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MCCRORY, AUDREY MONA. The Extent of Social Resistance to the Notion of Sexual Expression by Elderly Men and Women. (1976) Directed by: Dr. Rebecca M. Smith. Pp. 72.

This study investigated the extent of social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly among a quota sample of 104 young and elderly men and women. A two-version, 22 statement, Likert-type attitudinal questionnaire called the SRSE Attitude Scale was specifically designed to measure social resistance to sexual expression (SRSE). Subjects were divided into eight equal age-sex cells.

A 2 x 2 x 2 factorial design was employed to test for response differences by age by sex by case. One half of the 104 respondents received the version referring to the case of a 25-year-old newlywed couple, while the other half received the version referring to the case of a 65-year-old newlywed couple. An ANOVA revealed that elderly respondents' scores were significantly higher than young respondents' scores, indicating that these elderly respondents had a higher SRSE.

Through factor analysis, three factors, "Morality," "Marital Relations," and "Public Display" were identified. For each factor, elderly respondents also displayed more SRSE compared to the young. For the Marital Relations factor, most directly related to sexual intimacy, males were more restrictive toward sexual expression and all respondents indicated more SRSE toward the old couple in the case. The one item out of the 22 generating the most SRSE by all respondents

concerned an unmarried couple's living together before marriage.

An ANOVA of mean scores indicated that all respondents did not differentiate to a significant degree between young and elderly sexual expression in the cases. Wide variations among the scores served to emphasize the fallacy of attempting to generalize about attitudes solely on the basis of chronological age.

MADEY ANN MCCLORY

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
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in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science in Social Sciences

Greensboro  
1976

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APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee:

THE EXTENT OF SOCIAL RESISTANCE TO THE  
NOTION OF SEXUAL EXPRESSION BY  
ELDERLY MEN AND WOMEN

by *Rebecca M. Smith*

Audrey Mona McCrory

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science in Home Economics

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largely toward the elderly population. This research sought to determine the extent of social resistance to sexual expression by elderly men and women.

Influencing negative attitudes toward elderly sexual expression are values, generally thought to be rooted in universal feelings about the sexual behavior of one's parents (Goffman, 1974). The idea of sexual relations between men and women of their parents' age is considered revolting especially to young people (Bernard, 1976). At the same time there is cultural prohibition regarding sexuality in which sex is encouraged and even expected for young men but old men are thought to be "sexually oppressed" while the young are thought to be "sexually elite" (p. 16).

Some of the stereotypes about elderly sexual behavior, which contribute to social resistance to geriatric sexual

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study was on cultural attitudes toward the notion of sexual expression among elderly men and women. The phrase "social resistance to sexual expression" was used to describe a totality of negative and restrictive attitudes toward sexual expression that is assumed to be present in varying degrees among some people of all ages but is directed largely toward the elderly population. This research sought to determine the extent of social resistance to sexual expression by elderly men and women.

Influencing negative attitudes toward elderly sexual expression are taboos, generally thought to be rooted in universal feelings about the sexual behavior of one's parents (Pfeiffer, 1974). The idea of sexual relations between men and women of their parents' age is considered revolting especially to young people (Bernard, 1956). At the same time there is cultural contradiction regarding sexuality in which sex is encouraged and even expected for youth while for old age Victorian "...secrecy shrouds sexual activity and interest" (Runciman, 1974, p. 54). Gochros (1972) considers the elderly in our society to be "sexually oppressed" while the young are thought to be among the "sexual elite" (p. 16).

Some of the stereotypes about elderly sexual behavior, which contribute to social resistance to geriatric sexual

expression, are the notion that they lack sexual desire and the belief that they are so physically unattractive that they are sexually undesirable (Butler & Lewis, 1973).

Systems of social norms which dictate age-appropriate behavior in our society also affect elderly behavior and their feelings about themselves as sexual beings. These "social clocks" (Neugarten, Moore, & Lowe, 1965, p. 710) can tell an elderly person to conduct himself in a prescribed manner and to "be his age." Pollack contended that through internalization of such behavioral constraints many elderly men and women experience not only occupational but "sexual retirement" (1956, p. 15).

#### Background for the Study

There seem to be dramatically contrasting attitudes toward young couples and old couples who are about to be married. To illustrate this, news of a young couple's coming marriage is usually met with smiles of approval in contemplation of a happy event. Conversely, marriage plans of an elderly couple are most likely to be greeted with smiles of condescension, and the impending marriage is viewed as a curious, if not downright improper, occurrence. In commenting on remarriage in the middle and older years, Bernard said that only those persons who were sure of themselves would be "...willing to run the gauntlet of community and family disapproval which remarriage in these age groups sometimes involves" (1956, p. 277).

Inherent implications of sexual intimacy in the marriage act itself seemed to be a plausible explanation for at least some of the expressed disapproval toward these elderly marriages. Further reading confirmed this opinion in that despite the societal climate of greater openness and frankness in many aspects of human sexual expression, social resistance to the notion of sexual expression by elderly adults persists today.

Research and information about elderly sexual interest and activity lags far behind that available on adolescents and younger adults (Burnside, 1974; Pfeiffer, 1969). Much of the normative data collected has been done by persons with a medical orientation, has focused on patients with various ailments (Finkle, Moyers, Tobenkin, & Karg, 1959; Rubin & Babbott, 1960), and was originally published in medical journals. Among other significant studies, however, (De Nicola & Peruzza, 1974; Kinsey, 1953; Masters & Johnson, 1966; Pfeiffer, 1969) several considered the cultural, psychological and social factors in addition to physiological aspects of elderly sexual interest and activity. Sexologist, Isadore Rubin, contended that "...a sufficient amount of data now exists which leaves no doubt of the reality of sex interests and needs in the later years" (1968, p. 90).

Researchers encountered the taboo against sex in old age and found it a serious impediment to effective and needed research for determining patterns of sexual behavior in old age. Physicians and investigators themselves sometimes

experienced hesitancy and embarrassment when gathering data about the sex life of their elders. An example (Pfeiffer, 1969) was when young physicians at Duke University had trouble taking a sexual history of never-married elderly women. Out of 14 of these women, the young doctors gathered data on only four. Masters and Johnson (1966) have also cited difficulties in the recruiting of aged subjects for research of a sexual nature.

Some institutional "homes for the aged" project a negative attitude toward elderly sexual expression by strictly regulating and curtailing the sexual behavior of those elderly persons in their care. In one such instance, elderly male and female residents were prohibited from visiting alone in their respective bedrooms and allowed to marry one another only if they then leave the "home" and a lifetime investment behind (Masonic Home, 1964).

Broderick described a meeting with a group of staff members at a VA hospital in 1966 when he was doing his clinical internship. The group included social workers, psychiatrists, and psychologists, all of whom were unable to take the idea of sex after 60 seriously. There were many older male patients with whom these professionals worked, and Broderick deplored the fact that the workers "were surprised to find out that the age at which half of the men were still functioning was seventy" (1975, p. 5).

"Have you ever seen a double bed in an institution?" asked Burnside (1975, p. 47). She was highly critical of the



separation of husbands and wives, in some institutions, who have slept together for 50 years, and the fact that those institutionalized aged

...are often expected to lead a life of celibacy. While it is true that Victorian standards continue to exist in some aged persons, all too often it is the staff and/or the family who have the hang-up. (pp. 46-7)

Feelings of guilt and repression are fostered among the aged themselves, who then fear society's ridicule. Elderly males are frequently labeled "dirty old men" while elderly females are often considered the "neuters of our culture" (Butler & Lewis, p. 99), or undignified and depraved if they openly express sexual interest (Butler & Lewis, 1973; Comfort, 1974).

The possibility of negative effects upon the marriage decisions of the elderly has been cited by McKain (1972) in his study of retirement marriages. Most of these marriages, he reported, were still successful after five years. He noted occasions, however, when well-meaning friends of elderly couples attempted to discourage these late-in-life marriages by accusing the prospective bride and groom of being disrespectful and immature. Although it is impossible to ascertain how many persons have been deterred from finding love and companionship through marriage in later years, McKain believes that the number is quite large.

### Purposes of the Research

1. To design a dual-purpose instrument that measures social resistance to the notion of sexual expression by both young and elderly adults.
2. To determine if subjects discriminate between sexual expression by young and elderly adults.
3. To identify particular areas in which a need for educational effort is indicated.

### Definitions

The following are definitions pertinent to the study:

1. Elderly men and women. The arbitrary and commonly used age of 65 and over was used, as exemplified by its use in a recent Lou Harris poll sponsored by the National Council on Aging (1975).
2. Sexual expression referred to forms of public and private conduct in which an individual's sexuality is either implied or actively demonstrated. Behaviors described as "sexual expression" were not limited to the sex act itself, but included ways in which elderly men and women and individuals of all ages demonstrate the feeling of being masculine and feminine (Lobsenze, p. 29).

A wide range of behavior such as kissing, mode of dress, use of language, flirtation, selection of reading and viewing material, and marriage customs were considered as forms of sexual expression.



3. Social resistance to sexual expression (SRSE) was used to describe a totality of negative and restrictive attitudes on the part of an individual or a group toward the notion of public or private sexual interest and expression.

It was assumed that that there exists in our society today pervasive negative attitudes toward geriatric sexual interest and expression. Researchers Masters and Johnson (1966) have described an encounter with what they termed "rigid social resistance" (p. 260) when they experienced difficulties in evaluating the aging male's sexuality. Their explanation for the presence of this "rigid social resistance" was that the Victorian influence in society has decreed for years that the aging male should have no interest in sexuality.

4. Stereotype. A stereotype is usually a pejorative term (Brown, 1965) in which one member of a group is believed to have the same characteristics of all other members of that group. The essence of a stereotype is not that the belief is false or that it does not apply to some members of the group, but that it does not apply to all group members. A stereotype fails to recognize differences among group members.

### Hypotheses

To test the following hypotheses relating to social resistance to sexual expression a dual-version attitudinal questionnaire about the behavior of the newly-married (young couple and old couple) was submitted to a group of young and elderly respondents:

1. All respondents will show significantly less social resistance to sexual expression by the young couple than to that by the elderly couple.
2. Elderly respondents will show significantly greater social resistance than young respondents to sexual expression by both the young and elderly couple.
3. Young respondents will show significantly greater social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly couple than to that by the young couple.
4. Elderly respondents will show significantly greater social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly couple than to that by the young couple.
5. Elderly respondents will show significantly less social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly couple than do the young respondents.
6. Young respondents will show significantly less social resistance to sexual expression by the young couple than do the elderly respondents.
7. Elderly female respondents will show significantly greater social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly couple than do the elderly male respondents.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

Among empirical research studies in the area of cultural attitudes toward elderly persons, no one study has been found which concentrates solely on attitudes toward sexual expression by the elderly. However, those studies which contain pertinent segments will be discussed and evaluated. Bell and Stanfield contended that most of this research "...has been focused on the development of various instruments assessing age stereotypical information" and that generally speaking, the results have not been "fruitful" (1973, p. 491).

Tuckman and Lorge (1952) have been among the most active in the area of cultural attitudes toward the elderly. In this early study they assumed the existence of popular misconceptions and myths about old people and hypothesized that as individuals become less able to function independently in the community, they subscribe to a greater degree to the misconceptions and stereotypes of old age. They demonstrated the internalization of stereotypes by the elderly themselves as they become less able to function in the community. The questionnaire used consisted of 137 stereotypic statements, four of which are classed in the area of "sex" but were not described in the published article. Elderly persons were interviewed and categorized by place of residence: in the

community, in intermediate environments, and in institutions. These elderly participants were asked for a "yes" or "no" response.

The hypothesis that elderly persons residing in institutions subscribe to the usual old-age stereotypes to a significantly greater degree than do others was confirmed. However, an item analysis of the "sex" category statements did not confirm the hypothesis. For all places of residence, less than half the respondents subscribed to the stereotypic statements about sex (community 45%; intermediate 30%; institutional 38%), and no significant difference was shown between their responses.

Later, Tuckman and Lorge (1953) investigated attitudes of 147 graduate students. Responses of those students under 30 (46 men and 23 women) were compared with those over 30 (46 men and 32 women). The instrument again contained the same 137 statements (including 13 categories) all being misconceptions and negative stereotypes about old people. The total group showed a wide variation of agreement with the statements (ranging from 1 to 93%), but the mean scores for the two groups (under 30 and over 30) proved to be nearly identical.

Included in the "sex" category were the following statements: "They should not marry; they marry persons much younger than themselves; and they have no interest in the opposite sex." A mean of 27% of all respondents (30% for the young-age group; 25% for the older-age group) agreed with

the stereotypic statements about sex, low in comparison to scores for some other categories such as "conservatism" (74%) and "activities and interests" (51%).

The authors concluded that there is "substantial acceptance of the misconceptions and stereotypes about old people." However, this clearly was not demonstrated in the "sex" data.

Five years later Tuckman and Lorge (1958) reported on the use of a revised 50-statement questionnaire. It was hypothesized that those persons who had had some direct contact and had worked with the aged would be less likely to subscribe to stereotypes about old people than do people not in direct contact. Those respondents who had contact with the elderly included 92 men and women aged 25 to 79 years. Surprisingly, between respondents over age 60 and under age 60, no difference was found in the amount of acceptance of the stereotypes for all statements.

Only two sex-category statements were retained in this questionnaire. To the items "They should not marry" and "Have no interest in the opposite sex" 16% of this group responded in the affirmative.

The same questionnaire was then given to four other groups: 100 college undergraduates (average age, 19), 500 graduate students (average age 32), 100 middle-aged persons (average age, 50), and 100 older-aged persons (average age, 75). To the statement, "Should not marry," 29% of the undergraduates, 54% of the middle-aged and 35% of the aged group



responded affirmatively, higher than the contact group. Eleven percent of the graduate students responded in the affirmative. To the statement, "Have no interest in the opposite sex" middle-aged responses (47%) and older-aged responses (37%) were again significantly higher than the contact group (16%). The percentage of the undergraduate (23%) and graduate students (13%) subscribing to the stereotype was close to that of the contact group (16%).

Data relating to social resistance to sexual expression from this large group of subjects suggested that those middle-aged and older-aged respondents who presumably had little knowledge of, or contact with, the aged were more apt to subscribe to negative stereotypes regarding geriatric sexual expression.

Methodological criticism of Tuckman and Lorge's research has been in two main areas:

1. The absence of stimulus-group validity by the researchers who do not "...control for the generality of the attitude in the sense that subjects may attribute to 'most people' or to 'people in general' the very same qualities that were assigned to 'old people'" (Golde & Kogan, 1959, p. 355).
2. The lack of control for response-set effects that are inherent in statements requiring a "yes" or "no" response (Golde & Kogan, 1959).

Despite such valid methodological criticism of the researchers' work, Tuckman and Lorge focused scholarly

attention on stereotypic attitudes toward the aged. Their work has served as an impetus for new approaches to the problem.

Golde and Kogan (1959) attempted to eliminate the response-set problems of the Tuckman-Lorge scale. These researchers reported the development of an instrument to test the hypothesis that attitudes toward old people are qualitatively different from "people in general."

The questionnaire they used consisted of 25 incomplete sentences and was presented to 100 students aged 17-23. Fifty respondents received the control form referring to "most people" while the rest received the experimental form referring to "most old people." Use of the control form also eliminated the problem of stimulus-group validity.

Two statements related to social resistance to sexual expression. When completing the open-ended sentence stem, "Sex for most old people....," 99.2% of the experimental group used "negligible, or unimportant, past" compared to its use by only 4.9% of the control group.

Significant response differences were also revealed in completion of the sentence stem, "One of the greatest pleasures of old people is...." Fifty-five per cent of the experimental group chose "companionship" while 41.7% of the control group chose "love and sex." The existence of social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly among a substantial number of the experimental group was clearly indicated by this study.



In 1961 Axelrod and Eisdorfer reported on the administration of a revision of the original Tuckman-Lorge 137-item questionnaire to 277 university students in an effort to check the stimulus-group validity. There was acceleration of scores as the age group to which the statements referred increased, indicating stimulus-group validity of the questionnaire for those 96 items in which this occurs.

A significantly greater number of respondents subscribed to stereotypic statements referring to the elderly in the "sex" category than to younger referents. However, percentages of those responding "yes" to the sex-category statements were still low. The highest for "They should not marry" was only 27% and for "They have no interest in the opposite sex" 29%.

With this new knowledge, Kogan and Wallach (1961) attempted to determine the nature and extent of chronological age changes in attitudes and values by using a semantic differential approach. A group of young-adult college students (66 men and 71 women) and a group of older adults (55 men and 76 women) were given "response booklets" with the first two pages devoted to very lengthy and complicated instructions. In all, 28 "concepts" were listed for rating on a 25, 7-point adjective rating scales. Contained in the "Family-Interpersonal Category" were the concepts of "love" and "sex." Only the "love" category received a significantly more positive evaluation by the younger women compared to the older women. The results of the study relating to social

resistance to sexual expression were indeterminate. Indeed, Neugarten advised that cross-sectional data as used in this study

...must be interpreted with caution since the differences between age groups may reflect historical changes in values and attitudes as much as changes that accompany increased age itself. (1965, p. 716)

Using again the procedure in which sentence stems are to be completed from a choice of responses, Kogan and Shelton (1962) decided that since in previous research (1959) it had been successfully demonstrated that "...old people' are cognitively differentiated from the general population" (p.94) they would undertake a direct comparison between young and older adults' beliefs about "old people." In the earlier study all of the respondents were young (Golde & Kogan, 1959).

Twenty incomplete sentence stems were used but "sex for most people is..." was the only one relating to sexual expression. No significant difference in per cent of responses between young and old respondents was seen, but both percentages were high. Among male respondents, 66.7% of the older and 75.7% of the younger males believed: "Sex for most old people is negligible or unimportant, past, no longer interesting." Per cent of responses for elderly females was 73.5% and 68.2% for young females.

Those respondents choosing instead to complete the same sentence stem with "negative, distasteful, connotation, taboo" were 20.5% of the older males, 5.4% of the younger males, 6.1% of the older females, and 9.1% of the younger females.

A high percentage of respondents indicated that they subscribed to negative stereotypical attitudes about elderly sexual behavior, as in the 1959 study.

Peterson (1971) referred to an unpublished paper by the University of Wisconsin School of Social Work in which over 350 persons were divided almost evenly into three age groups: young adult, middle-aged adults, and elderly adults. Respondents were asked to respond to statements about old people "...which represented a departure from standards which traditionally have found acceptance" and to pass judgment as to the appropriateness of the behavior for old people (p. 76). In addition, elderly respondents were asked to state how they expected the young adults to respond.

For the statements, "A widower of 70 who re-marries even though his adult children do not approve" and, "A 68-year-old widow inviting a widower to her home for dinner," scores decreased as the age of respondents increased (indicating less acceptance of the behavior item with increasing age). Young respondents turned out to be much more approving of elderly behavior in the area of sexual expression than was anticipated by the elderly themselves.

Other researchers were also interested in attitudes toward the elderly. Oberleder (1961) reported on a study conducted among 40 residents (average age 78) at one of the country's more progressive homes for the aged.

The Oberleder study concerned some of the dynamics of institutional adjustment. She hypothesized that the elderly

well-adjusted institutionalized residents had accepted culturally-determined values and stereotypes of old age whereas maladjusted residents were resisting these same values and stereotypes. The results were statistically significant but directly contradicted the hypothesis.

The Oberleder Attitude Scale (OAT), now standardized among a typical population, takes into consideration some inherent problems with elderly respondents such as fatigability, and shows that the responses are related to observable personal characteristics. It consists of 25 statements with a summated rating scale and 4 response categories. The only statement relating to social resistance to sexual expression is: "I think it is usually a mistake for people over 65 to marry." This item was considered by the author to be among those which both expressed critical and defeatist attitudes and were most sensitive in differentiating between the two groups of residents.

This scale, which is uniquely designed to be administered to elderly subjects, brings to a focus the fact that all elderly persons do not subscribe to age-designated stereotypes. Importantly, those with "younger values" were the residents who were found to be well-adjusted to institutional life.

Silverstone and Wynter (1975) described a practical application of the OAT. They used it to test elderly residents for an institutional research project in order to assess effects on elderly residents' attitudes of introducing

heterosexual living space on two former all-male and all-female floors. Findings indicated no significant attitude changes.

Sexuality in nursing homes was studied by Wasow and Loeb (1975). This research project was carried out by seven social work students. The goal was to determine the extent of sexual activities and interest at nursing homes. Additionally, attitudes toward sexuality of both residents and staff were investigated.

The researchers encountered a 50% refusal rate when staff members were asked to predetermine which residents were willing to be interviewed about sex. How many interviews were incomplete due to embarrassment of the interviewees was not known. Therefore, preliminary to the interviewing, students underwent a training program in the areas of interviewing skills, aging, and sexuality.

Sixty-three elderly men and women, together with 17 staff members were interviewed. Attitudes toward sexual activity were categorized as permissive, semi-restrictive and restrictive. Factual knowledge about sex was related to attitudes.

Those respondents with a low factual knowledge about sex had significantly more restrictive sexual attitudes ( $\chi^2=.001$ ). Elderly females held the highest proportion of restrictive attitudes, while staff members were found to be more permissive. Summarizing, it was found that residents of the nursing



homes believed sexual activity is more appropriate for people other than themselves.

A deterrent to the reliability of data gathered from the interview method for such a sensitive subject is the inability of the interviewer to determine if the respondent is stating his actual feelings or those he thinks the interviewer would consider proper. Responses of staff members are also subject to question. While staff responses were classed as generally permissive, the authors pointed to the lack of information as to how the staff might act in situations where elderly sexual expression might interfere with institutional decorum.

This review of research about attitudes of and toward sexual behavior by the elderly leads to some general statements: Investigative research into cultural attitudes toward the aged generally supported the existence of myths and stereotypes about the aged. No one study was found which focused exclusively on attitudes toward sexual expression by the aged, but those studies which included the sexual category have been reviewed. While much of the data resulting from segments of those studies pertinent to attitudes toward sexual expression by the aged have produced indeterminate results due to methodological problems, a small amount of reliable data indicate that social resistance to the notion of sexual expression by the elderly is held in varying degrees by both young and old and to a greater degree by the old.

## CHAPTER 3

### PROCEDURE

The purpose of the research was to determine the extent of social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly among a group of both young and elderly men and women. An instrument in the form of a two-version attitudinal questionnaire, one about a case of young newlyweds and one about a case of elderly newlyweds, was therefore designed to measure each respondent's social resistance to sexual expression. The instrument was also designed to determine if young and elderly respondents discriminated between their resistance to sexual expression by the young and their resistance to sexual expression by the elderly.

#### Design of the Research

A 2 x 2 x 2 factorial design was employed to test the hypotheses. The factors were these: age of respondent (young or elderly); age in the case (young or elderly couple); and sex of respondent.

The 104 respondents were divided into four age-sex cells. One-half of the respondents included 13 young men, 13 young women, 13 elderly men and 13 elderly women, all of whom were given Version 1 ( $V_1$ ) of the questionnaire which presented the stimulus case of the 25-year-old couple. The other half of the respondents was also divided into four



similar age-sex cells, but these were given Version 2 ( $V_2$ ) of the questionnaire which included the stimulus case of the 65-year-old couple. The assignment to the stimulus case was random.

#### Description of the Sample

A quota sample (Miller, 1970) of 104 young and elderly respondents was used. Control for social class was made by using lower middle and middle class people, because it was expected that the elderly people would tend to be from these classes. Most of the elderly respondents resided in area homes for the aged, in apartments, or in private rooms. Most of them appeared to lead relatively independent lives. A few were institutionalized for medical care. The rest lived in the community and attended a local church social group for the elderly. Students from a local technical school rather than from the university were used as young respondents to get a comparable lower middle and middle class group.

A modification of Hollingshead's scale to estimate class position (1958) was used to judge the education and/or occupation level. Young respondents' and elderly respondents' social class was estimated to be mainly within the lower middle and middle class range.

Only those elderly subjects who were intellectually alert in the judgment of professional workers (usually a social worker or nurse who was familiar with the person) were asked to participate in the research project. Subjects were

also screened for intellectual alertness by a conversation with the interviewer.

### Design of the Instrument

To carry out the research aims, and also to insure stimulus-group validity of the instrument (Axelrod & Eisendorfer, 1961) two nearly identical versions of a Likert-type attitudinal questionnaire (Miller, 1970) were prepared. The final instrument had two simply worded introductory paragraphs and 27 statements referring to sexual expression by a hypothetical couple. In Version 1 ( $V_1$ ) the couple was 25 years old, and in Version 2 ( $V_2$ ) the couple was 65 years old (see Appendices A and B). The situation was built around one likely to be encountered by an elderly couple, but one that could also be adapted to a young couple. Both the man and woman in each case had been married before, with the woman's daughter from a previous marriage objecting to her mother's remarriage.

Categorization of Questionnaire Statements. Statements devised for the questionnaire fell into the following general categories:

1. Forms of sexual expression which may depart from individual traditional ethical or moral standards but which nevertheless are indulged in by a substantial segment of society as exemplified by a Lou Harris poll indicating changing American morality ("Changing Morality," 1969). Items in this category included attendance at an X-rated movie, the

reading of erotic literature, living together before marriage, flirting by a married man, and the telling of dirty jokes.

2. Forms of sexual expression intended to evoke stereotypic notions about the "sexless older years" were items about male impotency, intimate sleeping arrangements, and the presence of love and romance within a marriage. This category was supported by a 1959 study (Finkle, et al.) in which 101 men, ages 55 to 86, all ambulatory patients, were interviewed. It was found that 65% under age 69 and 34% over age 70 were still potent. There were marked individual differences among the men, however, with two men over 80 still sexually active. The researchers concluded that "among sexually potent men marital status is more influential than occupation or age in encouraging continued sexual activity" (p. 1391).

Among 250 volunteer geriatric subjects interviewed for a 1960 (Newman & Nichols) study (aged 60 to 93) 54% who were still married were still active sexually. Cessation of sexual activity was found to be related to a decline in physical health of one or more of the partners. The main findings of the study were that despite a decline in sexual activity and strength of the sexual drive, elderly men can continue to be active, some even until the ninth decade. The main determinants are reasonably good health and partners who are also still physically healthy. In that same study, Newman and Nichols' most significant statements relevant to this present study was this: "...the feelings and attitudes of

people are directly related to the expectations of the society in which they live" (p. 117). They add that physicians often see old people who are guilty about their sexual feelings.

Other more recent studies have confirmed these findings. Pfeiffer said (1969) that there appears to be no single age "...at which all men stop having sexual intercourse" (p. 26). He contended that two out of three men in their early 60s are still sexually active. Data collected in a 1974 study also tended to confirm previous findings in that male sexual performance does decline during old age but with a wide range of differences among individuals which are determined by a variety of factors (Pfeiffer & Davis).

3. Forms of sexual expression which were assumed to be age-appropriate for young dating and newlywed couples such as public displays of affection, the act of marriage, and the wearing of see-through nightgowns by a new bride.

Statement number eight, which includes a daughter's opposition to a mother's remarriage, is designed to relate (in the case of the elderly couple) to some comments by McKain (1969) regarding a middle-aged child's opposition to a parent's remarriage. He found that a frequent, but not the only, reason for a grown child's opposition to an elderly parent's remarriage was that child's inability to accept the parent as a sexual being. Sometimes a role-reversal then takes place in which the child tries to assume the responsibility for the marriage, sometimes promoting and sometimes

discouraging the marriage. One case he describes is one in which "they made fun of marriage in the later years and chided the parent who gave more than a passing interest in the opposite sex" (p. 17). Some of the aged parents McKain interviewed said they just reasserted their parental role and got married anyway.

McKain found that the approval of older children, however, played an important part in the success of the five-year-old marriages he studied. Over four-fifths of the marriages which had been encouraged by the children were successful.

Statements seven and 22 relating to the marriage ceremony itself were included because there is some indication (McKain, 1969) that elderly couples favor private weddings because they fear public disapproval. Among elderly couples McKain interviewed, some felt it was improper "...to call attention to a December marriage by having a large wedding" (p. 28).

Sequence of Individual Statements. In order to avoid response set, 13 statements were worded with a positive and 14 with a negative orientation toward sexual expression. Sequence was determined at random and then altered in a few cases to insure logical order.

#### Validity of the Instrument

Face Validity. Seven students and nine instructors served as judges to determine face validity of the instrument. The judges were asked to rate each item on a scale



of 1-7 according to its relevance in measuring social resistance to sexual expression in the general population. Judges appeared to have some difficulty in separating their subjective feelings about sexual expression by the elderly from the request to rate the relevance of the items. Each judge had been given  $V_1$  and  $V_2$  of the questionnaire. A few judges gave identical statements a higher rating (indicating stronger social resistance) for the case of the elderly couple than for the case of the young couple.

In accordance with the judges' suggestions, two statements were added and three revised. The instrument was then resubmitted to the original judges in addition to six more instructors. The majority confirmed the instrument's face validity. Five judges rated the statements identically, confirming the intent of the design. Two judges misunderstood directions and rated statements subjectively. Their ratings were discarded.

Construct Validity. Factor analysis revealed components of social resistance to sexual expression. Three factors emerged which seemed to be very close to the three categories of items originally differentiated. This factor analysis reinforced the construct validity of the instrument when it was administered to 104 subjects.

#### Reliability of the Instrument

Response Consistency. Five reverse duplicate statements were used to insure internal reliability of the instrument

by determining if subjects were responding to the statements in a consistent manner. An attempt was made to conceal this internal reliability device through random placement and altered wording of corresponding statements.

The reverse duplicate statement for one item was this: "It was foolish for this couple to take a long honeymoon" was "Taking a long wedding trip was a fine thing for Jane and John to do." The numbers of the paired statements were 2 and 13; 11 and 16; 12 and 21; 15 and 20; 18 and 22. Since five of these statements referred to the same form of sexual expression as its corresponding statement they were not intended to be included in the final score for each subject.

Which five of the 10 paired statements to be discarded was determined randomly. In order to allow for some ambivalence of attitude by respondents, it was arbitrarily decided to discard those questionnaires in which more than two inconsistent responses were made. A few more than 104 respondents were used to allow for ineligible responses.

Reliability of Scoring. To gain a measure of reliability of scoring, the questionnaire was submitted to a panel of seven judges. They were instructed to rate the statements on a scale of 1-4, using response categories from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." A score of four indicated the most negative attitude that a person in this culture could have toward that particular form of sexual expression.

Internal Consistency. The instrument was pretested by administration to a class of 65 students, all of whom were



university undergraduates. Half was given  $V_1$  and the other  $V_2$ . Reliability test results were indeterminate due, apparently, to the class's recent lectures on elderly sexuality.

After giving the scale to 104 subjects, findings for correlation coefficient tests for reliability were these: for subjects receiving  $V_1$ , correlation coefficient was significant ( $p < .001$ ) for Kendall's test, ( $r = .6643$ ), and for Spearman's test ( $r = .8111$ ). For subjects receiving  $V_2$ , significance level was .001 ( $r = .6520$ ) and .001 ( $r = .8056$ ), respectively.

#### Scaling of the Instrument

Rating Scale. The range of scores for each response category was one to four, with four denoting the highest degree of social resistance to sexual expression possible for that particular statement. Positively worded statements were scored: SA=1; A=2; D=3; SD=4, while negatively worded statements were scored: SA=4; A=3; D=2; SD=1.

Operational Definition of Social Resistance to Sexual Expression. The total score of each respondent was arranged on a frequency distribution. Through calculation of the cumulative frequency of the scores it was observed that scores in the first quartile ranged from 29-40, those in the second and third quartiles ranged from 41-53, and those in the fourth quartile from 54 to 74. It was, therefore, determined that the degree of a respondent's social resistance to sexual

expression as indicated by his score would be correlated to that score's placement on the frequency distribution.

#### Administering the Instrument

Respondents were asked to read the version randomly selected for them. It was assumed that each respondent would react personally to the cases.

Elderly Respondents. Self administration of the questionnaire for less than half of the elderly respondents was not possible due to factors such as impaired hearing and sight. Because of the sensitive and potentially embarrassing nature of the topic, a private place for reading to the individual needed to be found. Most suitable in the case of the institutionalized elderly person, was his room or apartment.

In the case of social center respondents, permission was granted to use a private room near the general meeting area. However, this arrangement meant the giving up of at least one half hour of weekly social time by the elderly subject. Even so, most seemed pleased to be participants in a research project.

Considerable difficulty was encountered in obtaining 26 elderly male respondents who were both willing to cooperate and were intellectually intact. The ratio of men to women found in the institutions and social group was usually 1:20.

A moderate amount of initial suspicion and reticence was present with most elderly respondents. Care was taken to avoid giving the impression that the elderly were being studied as a kind of unique group. Instead, it was stressed that people of all ages were being contacted for the project, that no names of respondents would be used or recorded, that all answers were strictly confidential and that there were actually no "right" or "wrong" answers because how they felt was important.

The fact that the researcher was herself middle aged and a grandmother was a great help in facilitating the development of good rapport with the elderly subjects.

Young Respondents. Self administration of the questionnaire in a classroom setting was used for the young subjects, making the process considerably easier and less time consuming for the researcher than with the elderly.

Only a minor amount of initial suspicion and reticence was encountered with these young adults probably because the researcher was always introduced to the class by an interested and cooperative instructor. In addition, students are of necessity conditioned to following instructions and filling in forms. As with the elderly, the students were told that people of all ages were being contacted for the project, that no names would be used or recorded, all answers would be confidential, and that there were no "right" or "wrong" answers because how they felt was important.

Despite the fact that classes usually included students who were above the age required for the sample, the questionnaire was given to all those willing to participate so as to cause the least amount of class disruption. Subjects were instructed to remain silent during administration of the questionnaire, and those who had a question were told to raise their hands, in order to avoid disturbing and influencing others' responses.

A moderate amount of embarrassment due to the nature of the subject matter was observed in each of the seven technical school classes used, despite the fact that these were either all-male or all-female classes. About 10% of the respondents demonstrated embarrassment by ill-disguised facial expressions, restrained giggles, and exclamations. How much this minority influenced the majority's responses is open to conjecture.

A caveat regarding the difference between how the questionnaire was administered to the young and some of the elderly respondents, however, is necessary. As has been noted, self-administration for nearly half of the elderly was not feasible.

Stress was laid on the confidentiality of responses and the anonymity of respondents. It is difficult to assess, though, the extent to which elderly scores were influenced by the necessity of the researcher's reading of the questionnaire items to them.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The responses of all 104 young and elderly respondents to the two-version attitude instrument were analyzed to determine the social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly. A chi square statistic was used for item analysis, and an analysis of variance was done to test differences among subgroups' responses. A factor analysis was done to reveal a basic core of statements relating to social resistance to sexual expression. The emerging factors from the factor analysis was also subjected to an analysis of variance.

Mean scores for each of the 22 questionnaire items were computed separately for all young and elderly respondents. Each of the two groups of mean scores was then arranged in rank order, beginning with the highest mean score. Range is also included. This procedure was followed in order to determine which items evoked the most restrictive attitudes toward sexual expression among each of the young and elderly respondent groups. Six of the 22 items indicated some degree of SRSE by the young respondents, and 17 items indicated some degree of SRSE by the elderly respondents. The item referring to living together before marriage had the highest resistance for both ages (see Appendix C).



### Findings and Discussion in Relation to Hypotheses

An analysis of variance was computed to compare sex by age by case for social resistance to sexual expression. The only significant finding was between ages of respondents (see Table 1). Since there were major differences for age and case for some items (see Table 2), each hypothesis will be discussed by using the item analysis as well as the analysis of variance.

Hypothesis 1. That all respondents would show significantly less social resistance to sexual expression by the young couple than by the elderly couple in the case was rejected. The ANOVA revealed no significant difference between scores for all respondents in relation to the two cases, thereby indicating no discrimination between young and old sexual expression (see Table 1). There was, however, considerable variability among the scores. The range of scores among young respondents was 29-63 ( $M=42.1$ ) and among elderly respondents was 34-71 ( $M=53.9$ ), thereby indicating that among both groups the degree of SRSE ranged from low to high.

There is a paucity of previous research studies about discrimination between elderly and young sexual expression by people of all age groups. Most studies concentrate on young adults' attitudes toward the elderly or on the elderly's attitudes about themselves, but there is very little to be found on a comparison of attitudes toward both young and elderly within the same study. Even then, these attitude

Table 1

Analysis of Variance for Sex by Age by Case  
on Social Resistance to Sexual Expression

Variable	df	SS	F Value	Prob	F
A (Sex)	1	41.885	0.677	0.413	
B (Age)	1	3554.462	57.473	0.0001*	
C (Case)	1	64.654	1.045	0.309	
AB (Sex x Age)	1	129.385	2.092	0.151	
AC (Sex x Case)	1	1.885	0.030	0.862	
BC (Age x Case)	1	2.462	0.040	0.842	

\*  $p < .05$   
N = 104

Mean Scores for Respondents for Sex by Age by Case

N	Sex	Age	Case	Mean Score
52	male	-	-	48.6154
52	female	-	-	47.3462
52	-	young	-	42.1346*
52	-	old	-	53.8269*
52	-	-	young	47.1923
52	-	-	old	48.7692
26	-	young	young	41.5000
26	-	young	old	42.7692
26	-	old	young	52.7692
26	-	old	old	54.7692
13	male	old	old	54.9231
13	female	old	old	54.6154

\*  $p < .05$

Table 2

Item Analysis by Age and Case - Per cent of Responses in  
the Two High SRSE Response Categories\*

Item	Young S <sub>s</sub> N=52		Old S <sub>s</sub> N=52	
	Young Case N=26	Old Case N=26	Young Case N=26	Old Case N=26
1. I think it was good for this pair to marry.	11.5	0.0	7.7	7.6
2. I would be embarrassed to see Jane and John kissing in public.	7.7	3.8	26.9	42.3
3. I believe Jane and John should have tried living together before marriage.	61.5	73.1	100.0	96.2
4. I believe young/elderly men like John are sinful if they visit massage parlors.	19.2	26.9	65.4	65.4
5. I would be pleased to see Jane and John out dancing cheek to cheek.	3.8	3.8	38.5	34.6
6. I think new brides such as Jane should be able to wear see-through nightgowns.	7.6	11.5	7.6	50.0
7. Jane and John should have had a small private wedding.	11.5	11.5	73.1	92.3
8. I think Jane's young/middle-aged daughter was wrong in opposing her mother's remarriage.	69.2	26.9	19.2	3.8
9. It disgusts me to hear young/elderly men tell dirty jokes at parties.	19.2	46.1	84.6	92.3
10. John is probably sexually impotent.	3.8	11.5	3.8	34.6
11. I believe young/elderly couples should sleep in twin beds.	7.6	7.6	7.6	61.6

Item	Young S <sub>s</sub> N=52		Old S <sub>s</sub> N=52	
	Young Case N=26	Old Case N=26	Young Case N=26	Old Case N=26
12. It is perfectly proper for Jane to go to X-rated movies.	11.5	19.2	84.6	69.2
13. (14)** I think this couple's sexual activity could be very satisfying.	0.0	3.6	7.6	19.2
14. (17)** It is in poor taste for John to hug Jane close to him when friends are present.	0.0	0.0	46.1	42.3
15. (19)** It bothers me to think of this young/elderly couple actually having sexual relations.	0.0	0.0	3.8	15.3
16. (20)** It sounds like this couple really married to experience a love relationship.	34.6	30.7	19.2	23.1
17. (22)** Taking a long wedding trip was a fine thing for Jane and John to do.	0.0	3.8	26.9	19.2
18. (23)** I believe there could be little romance in this marriage.	15.4	19.2	11.5	34.6
19. (24)** I would be embarrassed to hear John call Jane "loving pet names."	3.8	7.7	19.2	30.8
20. (25)** I don't think John should give special attention to young single women at parties.	61.5	53.9	80.8	80.8
21. (26)** John shows a healthy interest in sex if he reads <u>Playboy</u> .	61.5	69.2	65.4	46.1
22. (27)** Young/elderly couples should be able to have large church weddings.	3.8	3.8	19.2	57.7

\* Indicating negative restrictive attitudes toward sexual expression.

\*\* Original item number in questionnaire (see Appendix A and B).

studies contain few statements relating to sexual expression. However, Golde and Kogan's 1959 study using a control and experimental group of students found that attitudes toward geriatric sexual expression by the experimental group were significantly more negative than those of the control group whose referent was "most people." In addition, college students in the 1961 study (Axelrod & Eisdorfer) displayed more social resistance to sexual expression by elderly referents than to young referents.

When Kogan and Shelton (1962) undertook to compare directly responses of old and young adults, they found no significant difference between their attitudes toward elderly sexual expression. High percentages of both the young and old respondents subscribed to the stereotype of the "sexless older years."

In reporting a study in which young adults, middle-aged adults, and elderly-adult respondents reacted to elderly sexual behavior items, Peterson (1971) stated that as the age of the respondent increased, the more restrictive attitudes toward sexual expression became. It was also demonstrated by Oberleder (1961) that there is varying acceptance among the elderly themselves of the negative stereotypes relating to geriatric sexual expression. The 1975 study (Silverstone & Wynter) also found that young and elderly attitudes toward sexual expression by the elderly varied and were related to factual knowledge about sex.



It is not possible to interpret the findings adequately for this hypothesis with previous research, because no studies apply completely to the statement. Previous studies indicated more restrictive attitudes toward sexual expression by the elderly, however, both by the young and elderly. But there was no similar comparison found between attitudes toward the young.

Hypothesis 2. That elderly respondents would show significantly greater social resistance than young respondents to sexual expression by both the young and elderly couples was supported. Data indicated a statistically significant difference ( $p < .0001$ ) between mean scores of the young and elderly (see Table 1). Elderly respondents clearly exhibited more restrictive attitudes toward sexual expression by the newlywed couple in both cases.

One possible explanation for the elderly's more restrictive attitudes is that as one grows older one is apt to become more conservative. Burnside, who is director of nursing at the Andrus Gerontology Center, believes that the increasingly strict super ego of some aging individuals is demonstrated by the way in which "...aged peers can be quite critical of sexual behavior and romance of their fellows" (1975, p. 49). Kogan and Wallach (1961) attempted to determine the nature and extent of chronological age changes in attitudes and values but results in the area of sexual expression were indeterminate. However, only a longitudinal approach could accurately assess whether age does affect attitudes.

A more likely explanation is that this cohort group of elderly subjects was socialized and educated during an era in which more restrictive social norms prevailed. However, the wide range of scores within the group of elderly respondents points up the difficulty in generalizing about a group of individualistic people solely on the basis of age. Most certainly, the apperceptive mass of each person's differing life experiences and socialization, together with historical influences, explains the variability among elderly scores.

Hypothesis 3. That young respondents would show significantly greater social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly couple than the young couple in the case was rejected. Mean scores for the 26 young respondents in the case of the young couple and the 26 young respondents in the case of the elderly couple reveal no significant difference (see Table 1).

An analysis of scores (see Table 2) for young respondents revealed that for item 10, only 3.8% of young respondents had high SRSE for  $V_1$  (the case of the 25-year-old man who is probably impotent), while 11.5% had high SRSE for the case of the elderly man. The latter score is substantially lower than those found by Golde and Kogan (1959), and Kogan and Shelton (1962) relative to the lack of or need for sexual expression by the elderly.

The negative cultural stereotype of the "dirty old man" is brought to mind (item 9) when 46.1% of young respondents demonstrated negative attitudes toward an old man telling

dirty jokes at a party, compared to 19.2% for the young man.

Item 15, which refers to a couple's having sexual relations, showed a differentiation by the young between the two cases. Importantly, however, young respondents indicated no SRSE for either case (there were no responses in either of the two highest scoring cells) but it was in the placement of responses within the two lowest scoring cells that the differences were found; for the young case 80% and 19.2% of the responses were in cells one and two; for the old case 42.3% and 57.7% of responses were in cells one and two. Interpretation of such differing response patterns for the two low-scoring cells is difficult. One can only speculate if SRSE toward the elderly case might have been higher if the statement about a couple's having sexual relations had referred to the respondent's own mother and father. These referents might have then generated deepseated taboos regarding sexual expression by one's own parents (Pfeiffer, 1974).

It appears that findings from studies conducted in the 50s and 60s may no longer apply to this new and better informed generation of young adults, and that those such as were reported by Peterson (1971) in which young adults were more approving of slightly unconventional behavior items concerning elderly sexual expression than were elderly adults are more representative of the attitudes of today's young adults.

Hypothesis 4. That elderly respondents would show greater social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly

couple than to that by the young couple. No significant difference in the mean scores of the 26 elderly respondents in the case of the young couple and those 26 elderly respondents in the case of the old couple was found (see Table 1). An analysis of scores for each item (see Table 2) reveals, however, seven important instances in which the elderly did display more SRSE toward the elderly couple than toward the young couple.

For item six, which refers to the wearing of a see-through nightgown by a new bride, 50% of the elderly indicated negative feelings toward wearing a garment of this nature by an elderly woman, compared to 7.6% in the case of the young woman. Wearing a gown which is assumed to be sexually provocative, even in the privacy of a bedroom, evoked SRSE by the elderly for half of the elderly respondents. It appears that these elderly have internalized negative societal stereotypes of the sort cited by Butler and Lewis (1973) that the aged are so physically unattractive that they are sexually undesirable. Another possible explanation is that these elderly feel they do not fit the pattern of the youth-centered "sexual elite" (Gochros, 1972, p. 16).

Item 10 refers to the probable impotence of a man. In the case of the 65-year-old man, 34.6% of the elderly thought he was probably sexually impotent, compared to 3.8% for the 25-year-old man. Expectations of elderly male sexual impotency could well become a self-fulfilling prophecy as

suggested by Rubin (1968). In actuality, according to Pfeiffer, two out of three men in their early 60s are still sexually active and there appears to be no single age for cessation of these activities (1969).

Elderly respondents also indicated for item 11 that twin-bed sleeping arrangements were more suitable for elderly (61.6%) than young (7.6%) newlywed couples. When conducting this study, several elderly persons remarked that old people have to get up to the bathroom during the night and have various aches and pains making it difficult to sleep with someone. Consequently, there can be no doubt that physical considerations influenced some of the responses. The incongruity of the advocacy by the elderly of twin beds for an elderly pair of newlyweds but not for young newlyweds is probably more closely related to the notion of "sexual retirement" (Pollack, 1956, p. 15). Expectations of little romance in the marriage of the elderly couple in item 19 (34.6%) compared to 11.5% for the young couple were also indicated by elderly respondents.

Outward display of affection by newlyweds such as kissing and through use of "loving pet names" for items two and 19 also evinced restrictive attitudes toward elderly sexual expression by the elderly for 42.3% and 30.8% of the respondents, respectively, compared to 26.9% and 19.2% toward the young case.



Items 7 and 22 are both concerned with marriage, and the elderly again differentiated between the young and elderly cases. Strong feelings against public display for a marriage involving those who had previous marriages were indicated. Those elderly respondents showing less negative restrictive attitudes toward the young case were 73.1%, compared to 92.3% toward the elderly case. Young respondents, by comparison, indicated only 11.5% for both cases.

This negative attitude of elderly respondents coincides with those noted by McKain (1972) in his study of retirement marriages. He speculated that the reason some elderly couples favored private weddings was that they feared public disapproval and kept the event a secret until it was over. Almost all of the elderly persons interviewed for this project were also quite vehement about the impropriety of any kind of display for a second marriage, no matter what the age. However, more SRSE by the elderly couple was also demonstrated here.

Item 22 does not refer to a second marriage but serves to compare age-related attitudes about large church weddings. Here the elderly again had more restrictive attitudes toward the elderly case (57.7%) than they did toward the young (19.2%). Young respondents had 3.8% for both cases. Neugarten's reference to a "social clock" (1965, p. 710) which dictates age-appropriate behavior seemingly does not apply to the young respondents for these items. However, Neugarten

theorized that older people are more apt to subscribe to age constraints and

...the old seem to have learned that age is a reasonable criterion by which to evaluate behavior, that to be 'off-time'...brings with it social and psychological sequelae that cannot be disregarded. (1965, p. 710)

As a further explanation of this theory, she said the young still have not adopted completely the view that age is an appropriate way to judge behavior, but that these views change as a part of the process of adult socialization. She did, however, caution that historical changes in values and attitudes may also account for the elderly's adherence to stricter norms for behavior.

Hypothesis 5. That elderly respondents would show significantly less social resistance than the young respondents to sexual expression by the elderly couple was rejected. Mean scores for the 26 elderly respondents in the case of the elderly and the 26 young respondents in the case of the young reveal no significant difference (see Table 1). Elderly respondents did, however, exhibit less SRSE by the elderly couple compared to that shown by the young respondents for two important items (see Table 2).

For item eight, which concerns the middle-aged daughter's opposition to her elderly mother's remarriage, 26.9% of the young respondents indicated high SRSE compared to 3.8% of the elderly. It is possible that the elderly respondents empathized with the plight of the elderly couple.

For item 21, in differentiating between the cases, elderly respondents inexplicably had less restrictive attitudes (46.1%) toward the elderly man who read Playboy than did the young (69.2%).

The findings of Kogan and Shelton (1962) in which they directly compared young and older adults' attitudes toward "old people" relate to this present study in that no significant difference between the responses was found for the single item relating to sexual expression by the elderly. However, a substantial percentage of both groups subscribed to the stereotype of elderly disinterest in sexual expression.

Hypothesis 6. That young respondents would show significantly less social resistance to sexual expression by the young couple than do the elderly respondents was rejected. The AVOVA revealed no significant difference between mean scores for young and old respondents for the case of the young couple (see Table 1). There are seven items (see Table 2) in which major differences, however, can be found when comparing young and elderly scores in which young respondents did exhibit less SRSE toward the young case than did the elderly.

Five of these items can be categorized as being in the "morality" and "ethical" group of items devised for the questionnaire. For item 3, which is concerned with a young couple's living together before marriage, 61.5% of the young respondents compared to 100% of the elderly respondents

displayed high SRSE toward this behavior by the couple. The visiting of a massage parlor (item 4) by a young man generated high SRSE by 19.2% of the young respondents compared to 65.4% of the elderly. For the telling of dirty jokes at a party by a young man (item 9) 19.2% of the young respondents indicated high SRSE compared to 84.6% of the elderly. Visits to X-rated movies by a young married woman (item 12) engendered high SRSE for 11.5% of young respondents and 84.6% of the elderly. Finally, for item 20, which concerns the flirtation of a young married man with a young single woman at a party, 61.5% of the young respondents compared to 80.8% of the elderly indicated high SRSE.

For item 7 which concerns a private wedding for a young man and woman, both of whom have been married before, 11.5% of the young respondents demonstrated high SRSE for it compared to 73.1% of the elderly.

Public display of affection in the presence of friends by a young newlywed couple (item 14) generated no SRSE by the young respondents compared to 46.1% of the elderly.

For all of these items, generally more restrictive attitudes toward sexual expression were indicated by elderly respondents toward the case of the young couple compared to the young respondents. Items relating to behavior in which moral and ethical considerations were involved generated the most SRSE by the elderly.

Contrasted to these elderly attitudes is the belief of Lobsenz (1974) that a 1970 U. S. Census report stating that

18,000 couples over 65 listed themselves as unmarried and living together is a "...vast understatement of the actual number" (p. 68). A Harris poll of 1969 is relevant to these present findings. The poll found that it was particularly the young and better-educated, "...the relatively affluent who reflect the most liberal views" ("Changing Morality," p. 59) about sex, and that substantial minorities of the population hold views "...that reveal significant shifts in traditional attitudes toward sex" (p. 59).

Hypothesis 7. That elderly female respondents would show significantly greater social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly couple than do the elderly male respondents was rejected. The ANOVA revealed no significant difference between mean scores for elderly male and female respondents for the elderly case (see Table 1). Wasow and Loeb (1975), however, found in their study concerning sexuality in nursing homes that female residents held more restrictive attitudes than the males.

#### Factor Analysis

Through use of factor analysis of respondents' scores several components of SRSE or a basic core of statements were identified. This grouping into identifiable components reinforced the construct validity of the SRSE Attitude Scale. Six factors were extracted (see Table 3). These were rotated to a quartrimax solution and grouped, using .5 as the minimum factor loading. Of the six factors, three



Table 3  
Summary of Factor Analyses

Factor	Variance	Per cent
1	3.95588	28.35
2	2.14484	15.37
3	1.55442	11.14
4	1.74058	12.47
5	1.84701	13.24
6	2.71166	19.43

Factor 2 "Marital Relations Factor"

10. The probable longevity of a newly-married man.
11. Newly-married couples should have.
12. (18)\* It is better to think of married couples having sexual relations.
13. (22)\* There could be little romance in this particular marriage.

Factor 6 "Public Display Factor"

14. (17)\* It is in poor taste for newly-married men to hug their wives in front of friends.
15. (23)\* It is a bit of showiness for girls to take a long wedding trip.
16. (24)\* It is unnecessary for newly-married men to call their wives "love."

\*Original item number is indicated in parentheses (see Appendixes 2 and 3)

Table 4

## Named Factors and Items

Item No.	Factor Items (paraphrased)
<u>Factor 1 "Morality Factor"</u>	
3.	A couple should try living together before marriage.
4.	It is sinful for a married man to visit a massage parlor.
6.	New brides should be able to wear see-through nightgowns.
9.	It is disgusting to hear married men tell dirty jokes at parties.
12.	It is perfectly proper for a married woman to attend X-rated movies.
20.	(26)* A married man shows a healthy interest in sex if he reads <u>Playboy</u> .
<u>Factor 2 "Marital Relations Factor"</u>	
10.	The probable impotency of a newly-married man.
11.	Newly-married couples should sleep in twin beds.
15.	(19)* It is bothersome to think of a married couple having sexual relations.
18.	(23)* There could be little romance in this particular marriage.
<u>Factor 6 "Public Display Factor"</u>	
14.	(17)* It is in poor taste for newly married men to hug their wives in front of friends.
17.	(22)* It is a fine thing for newlyweds to take a long wedding trip.
19.	(24)* It is embarrassing to hear newly-married men call their wives "loving pet names."
*Original item number in questionnaire (see Appendices A and B)	

(numbers 1, 2, and 6) showed the highest per cent of loadings and will be discussed.

These three factors were named for the concepts in the items which grouped together (see Table 4). Factor one was named the "Morality" factor since it included such concepts as living together without being married, massage parlors and X-rated movies. Factor two was named the "Marital Relations" factor because the items involved intimate relationships. "Public Display" was the name given to factor six since the concepts in these items were hugging in public, long wedding trips, and the use of pet names.

An analysis of variance was computed for age of respondent, sex, and age of the couple in the case for each of these three factors. The results are presented below.

Factor 1 (Morality Factor). The F ratio for the analysis of variance for all main effects was significant at the .001 level. When considering age of respondents alone, a significant difference between mean factor scores of responses of young and old respondents was found with the F ratio significant at the .001 level. Mean factor scores for all young respondents were 1.999 while those for all the elderly were 2.875. This indicated, as hypothesized (Hypothesis 2), that elderly respondents would display more SRSE than did the young, at least in the Morality Factor.

When considering the sex of respondents, no significant difference between mean factor scores for males and females

was found. When considering case alone, no significant difference between the young and old case was found. Although it was expected that respondents would be more resistant to sexual expression by older people, the significance level of .080 did not bear this out. No significant interactions between the factors of sex, age, and case were found.

Factor 2 (Marital Relations Factor). Variation within Factor 2 is shown by the F ratio for the three-way factor analysis of variance for the three main effects of sex, age, and case being significant at the .001 level. When considering sex of respondents alone, there was a significant difference between mean factor scores for males and females. The F ratio was significant at the .009 level, with mean factor scores for males .776 and those for females .442, indicating that the males were more restrictive toward sexual expression. Note that there was no sex main effect for the Morality Factor.

When considering age of respondents alone, a significant difference between mean factor scores of responses of young and old respondents was seen, with the F ratio significant at the .001 level. Mean factor scores for all young respondents were .396 while those for all the elderly were .822. These scores indicated, as expected, that old respondents have more SRSE than do young respondents in the Marital Relations Factor as well as in the Morality Factor.

When considering case alone, a significant difference between means for the young case and the old case was seen.

The F ratio was significant at the .001 level. The means for all respondents was .327 for the young case and .891 for the old case. This indicated, as expected, that all respondents demonstrated more SRSE toward the old case, at least in the Marital Relations Factor.

No significant interactions between sex, age, and case were found. This factor, however, which is most directly related to sexual intimacy, showed a significant difference in all three main areas of comparison.

Factor 6 (Public Display Factor). When considering the age of respondents alone, a significant difference between mean factor scores of young and old respondents was again found with the F ratio significant at the .022 level. Mean factor score was 1.319 for all young respondents and 1.675 for the old, indicating more restrictive attitudes toward sexual expression by the old respondents.

No significant differences were found for sex or case, and there were no significant interactions between sex, age, and case. Few significant differences can be accounted for by the extremely wide variation within the groups on the Public Display factor.

Discussion of Factor Analysis Findings. A basic core of six components was identified which reinforced the construct validity of the scale. For each of those factors with the three highest loading which were analyzed and discussed, the elderly respondents were found to have significantly more



SRSE than did the young respondents as was hypothesized (Hypothesis 2).

In addition to age differences, Factor 2 (Marital Relations Factor), which concerns intimate marital relations, revealed through a significant difference between mean factor scores that males were more restrictive toward sexual expression than females. Importantly, the significantly more restrictive attitude displayed for this factor toward the old case by all respondents can be related to Hypothesis 1 which postulated that all respondents would show significantly less SRSE by the young couple and thus indicated that negative attitudes toward geriatric sexual interest and expression exist among this group of respondents.

## CHAPTER 5

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent of social resistance to elderly sexual expression among a sample of both young and elderly men and women. An instrument in the form of a Likert-type attitudinal questionnaire, called the SRSE Attitude Scale, was designed specifically to measure social resistance to sexual expression.

Procedure

The rationale and background information necessary for construction of the questionnaire items was obtained from normative clinical data relating to elderly sexual expression, scholarly opinions concerning current cultural attitudes toward elderly sexual expression, and a review of related attitudinal research which essentially indicated that social resistance to elderly sexual expression by the elderly is held in varying degrees by both young and old and to a greater degree by the old. Categorization of items fell into three areas: (a) forms of sexual expression which may depart from individual ethical or moral standards but nevertheless are indulged in by a substantial segment of society; (b) forms of sexual expression intended to evoke stereotypical notions about the "sexless older years;" and (c) forms

of sexual expression usually assumed to be age-appropriate for young dating and newlywed couples.

The two versions of the SRSE scale were administered to a quota sample of 104 middle and lower middle class respondents, 52 elderly men and women (aged 65 and over) and 52 young men and women (aged 18-25), who were then further divided into equal age-sex cells (13 respondents in each of 8 cells). Version one of the questionnaire (which concerns a 25-year-old newly wed couple) was administered to half of the young and elderly respondent group. Version two of the questionnaire (which concerns a 65-year-old newlywed couple) was administered to the other half. This method was employed in order to determine, by comparison of respondents' scores to the two versions, if the respondents discriminated between attitudes toward sexual expression by the young and by the elderly.

To gain a measure of reliability of scoring of the instrument, seven judges (faculty and graduate students) indicated for each item what would be the most negative attitude a person in this culture could have toward that particular form of sexual expression. A panel of 16 persons (faculty and graduate students) also served as judges to determine the face validity of the instrument, with each judge given both versions of the questionnaire. These 16 judges reacted to each item on a scale of 1-7 according to its relevance in measuring broad social resistance to sexual expression. After revision and addition of some items, the

instrument was then resubmitted to six additional judges (faculty and graduate students) who confirmed the instrument's face validity.

Response consistency was insured by inclusion of five duplicate reverse statements, later discarded and not scored, to determine if respondents were answering statements in a consistent way. The instrument was pretested by administration to a university class. Correlation tests, for the 104 subjects' responses, for reliability were favorable.

### Findings

An analysis of mean scores for all 22 items revealed that the item which generated the most SRSE for both young and elderly respondents was the one which referred to a couple's living together before marriage. As a group, the elderly respondents in the sample convincingly demonstrated significantly more SRSE than did the young respondents as was hypothesized. Elderly respondents did not show greater social resistance to sexual expression just by the elderly couples as hypothesized. However, a substantial segment of the elderly group appear to have internalized negative societal stereotypes about the "sexless older years," indicated by the expression of more SRSE toward the elderly couple than toward the young couple for certain items as those relating to romance in marriage, intimate wearing apparel and sleeping arrangements for newlywed couples, public display of affection and the probable impotency of a newlywed male.

The elderly group also demonstrated strongly held convictions against the seeming impropriety of public display for a wedding involving a remarriage. When that remarriage pertained to the remarriage of an elderly couple, the elderly were particularly adamant. More of the elderly group also reacted negatively to the notion of an elderly couple's having a large church wedding.

In two instances the elderly indicated substantially less SRSE toward the elderly case, however. More elderly were tolerant toward an elderly man's reading of Playboy, and they apparently had more empathy for an elderly mother whose middle-aged daughter was objecting to her mother's remarriage than did the young respondents.

The elderly were also more restrictive toward sexual expression by the young couple compared to the young respondents in some instances. Major differences were found when comparing young and elderly scores, five of which fell in the moral and ethical group. They include restrictive attitudes toward the notion of a young unmarried couple's living together, a young man's telling dirty jokes at a party, attendance at an X-rated movie by a young woman, the flirtation of a newly-married young man, and a massage parlor visit by a young man. Public display of affection and the proper form for a wedding involving a remarriage also generated high SRSE by the elderly toward the young case.

All respondents did not show significantly less social resistance to sexual expression by the young couple compared



to the elderly couple as had been hypothesized (Hypothesis 1).

Young respondents did not show significantly greater social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly couple compared to that shown the young couple as had been hypothesized (Hypothesis 3). However, in one important instance the stereotype of the "dirty old man" was revealed when substantially more young respondents objected to the old man's telling dirty jokes at a party compared to the young man. In addition, more young respondents thought the elderly man in the case would be impotent.

Young respondents did not show significantly less social resistance to sexual expression by the young couple than the elderly respondents as had been hypothesized (Hypothesis 6). In important instances, however, young respondents did exhibit less SRSE toward the young case than did the elderly respondents. These items related to an unmarried couple's living together, a young man's visiting a massage parlor, telling of dirty jokes at a party by a young man, visits to X-rated movies by a young woman, a private wedding ceremony in the case of a remarriage, and public display of affection.

Hypothesis 7, that elderly females would show significantly greater social resistance by the elderly case than do the elderly males, was rejected.

Identification of a basic core of components by factor analysis reinforced the construct validity of the scale.

Three identifiable high-loading factors were named, and an ANOVA computed for age of respondent, and sex of the respondent and age of the couple in the case for each of these factors. The factors were named "Morality," "Marital Relations," and "Public Display."

For all three factors elderly respondents indicated more SRSE for both cases than did young respondents, as had been hypothesized (Hypothesis 2). For the Marital Relations Factor, which was most related to sexual intimacy, males were found to be significantly more restrictive than females toward sexual expression (.009), while there were no sex differences found for the Morality or Public Display factors.

When considering case alone, for the Marital Relations Factor, significant differences at the .001 level were seen between responses for all respondents toward the case of the young and elderly couple. As was hypothesized (Hypothesis 1), all respondents indicated less SRSE toward the young case than toward the elderly case for this factor.

Great variability existed among scores for all respondents for each of the 22 items. Scores for the elderly ranged from 34 to 71, while those for the young were 29-63, revealing that among both young and elderly groups the degree of SRSE ranged from low to high.

### Conclusions

1. The elderly held significantly more restrictive attitudes toward the notion of sexual expression overall

but in particular for behavior items relating to moral implications, marital relations, and public display of affection.

2. More social resistance to sexual expression toward the elderly was revealed among this group of respondents toward behavior related to marital relations such as intimate sleeping arrangements, sexual relations, possible impotency, and romance in marriage.

3. Despite the supposedly lower moral standards in present-day society, all respondents displayed the greatest amount of resistance toward the notion of a couple's living together before marriage.

4. The group of young and elderly respondents did not differentiate significantly between young and elderly sexual expression. However, more restrictive attitudes by the elderly were generated toward geriatric sexual expression which related to public display of affection by elderly couples, sleeping arrangements, romance, the form of wedding ceremony, and male sexual performance.

5. A substantial segment of young respondents apparently subscribed to the negative societal stereotype of the "dirty old man," since they indicated more disapproval toward such behavior as telling dirty jokes at a party for an elderly man than for a young man.

6. Females were, surprisingly, less restrictive than the males in the area of marital relations.

7. Among the wide range of scores for both young and elderly respondents, a substantial amount of variability

was shown. This wide variation points up the inherent difficulties in, and perhaps the fallacy of, attempting to generalize about the beliefs of any group of people solely on the basis of chronological age. This is particularly true of the aged, who have been subjected not only to historical changes over a long span of years, but have been influenced in differing ways by an unassessable apperceptive mass of life experiences.

Eisdorfer spoke to this point most convincingly when he said, "The aged are people who from maturity on become less and less alike. Thus the aged are actually the most heterogeneous group in our population" (1975, p. 13).

8. Social resistance to sexual expression by the elderly was present among young respondents in varying amounts but was not as great as had been anticipated. The focus of young and elderly negative attitudes was on marital relations of the elderly. As a group, the elderly themselves were more restrictive toward elderly sexual expression, perhaps reflecting the fact that they had been socialized during a period of more restrictive societal norms.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

There are indications of a need for inclusion of attitudes toward sexual expression in longitudinal research studies in the field of aging, to determine if the attitudes of some individuals tend to become more restrictive with increasing chronological age.

### Recommendations for Future Research Uses of the SRSE Scale

1. In order to compare findings with this present research, it is recommended that the SRSE scale be administered to a quota group of lower to lower middle class middle-aged respondents age 35-55, in addition to respondents from differing ethnic and social classes.

2. A correlation between scores for the SRSE scale and Marital and Life Satisfaction scales is recommended to determine the influence of SRSE on satisfaction.

3. The SRSE scale should be further developed and standardized.

### Recommendations for Future Application of the SRSE Scale

1. This instrument, when standardized, could be used as a supplementary tool for counseling the elderly in the area of sexual expression. Those in the helping professions would be not only able to measure attitudes toward sexual expression, but, as was found during interviews, could use the questionnaire as a means of stimulating further discussion as well as developing rapport with the elderly person.

2. Since there is an apparent need for more enlightened attitudes toward elderly sexual expression particularly in regard to the institutionalized elderly, the SRSE scale is envisioned as a supplementary teaching tool which will enable those who work with the elderly to become more insightful about personal attitudes toward elderly sexual expression.



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## Appendix A

Years of Education _____ (grade school 6, high school 12, etc.)	Age _____ Sex _____
Occupation (former)* _____	Married _____
Spouse's occupation (former)* _____	Single _____
	Widowed _____
	Divorced _____

Opinionnaire \*\*

We are conducting a research study in which we plan to learn more about the feelings of people concerning sexual expression in couples before they are married (and still "dating") and just after marriage while they are still considered "newlyweds." The following paragraph is about a couple we call "Jane and John." Please read it carefully:

Jane and John had dated for some months when they realized they had fallen in love. The two had found many shared interests during their courtship. In addition, both were exactly the same age of 25 and each had a previous marriage. Jane's young daughter from that other marriage objected strenuously to her mother's remarriage, but the young couple went ahead and got married anyway. Their large church wedding was attended by many relatives and friends. After Jane and John returned from a long honeymoon they moved into a large apartment complex.

The following statements tell more about Jane and John, as well as some of their early marital adjustment experience. Please react to each statement and circle the letters that most accurately describe your feelings about each statement.

All replies are confidential.

\* Used only on elderly respondents' questionnaires

\*\* Version One

SA = Strongly Agree  
 A = Agree  
 D = Disagree  
 SD = Strongly Disagree

1. I think it was good for this pair to marry. SA A D SD
2. I would be embarrassed to see Jane and John kissing in public. SA A D SD
3. I believe Jane and John should have tried living together before marriage. SA A D SD
4. I believe young men like John are sinful if they visit massage parlors. SA A D SD
5. I would be pleased to see Jane and John out dancing "cheek to cheek." SA A D SD
6. I think new brides such as Jane should be able to wear see-through nightgowns. SA A D SD
7. Jane and John should have had a small private wedding. SA A D SD
8. I think Jane's young daughter was wrong in opposing her mother's remarriage. SA A D SD
9. It disgusts me to hear young men tell dirty jokes at parties. SA A D SD
10. John is probably sexually impotent. SA A D SD
11. I believe young couples should sleep in twin beds. SA A D SD
12. It is perfectly proper for Jane to go to "X"-rated movies. SA A D SD
13. Couples like Jane and John make me feel good when they kiss in front of other people. SA A D SD
14. I think this couple's sexual activity could be very satisfying. SA A D SD
15. I believe this young couple married just for companionship. SA A D SD
16. A double bed is the best sleeping arrangement for this couple. SA A D SD
17. It is in poor taste for John to hug Jane close to him when friends are present. SA A D SD
18. It was foolish for this couple to take a long honeymoon. SA A D SD
19. It bothers me to think of this young couple actually having sexual relations. SA A D SD



SA = Strongly Agree  
 A = Agree  
 D = Disagree  
 SD = Strongly Disagree

20. It sounds like this couple really married to experience a love relationship. SA A D SD
21. Jane should be ashamed if she attends "X"-rated movies. SA A D SD
22. Taking a long wedding trip was a fine thing for Jane and John to do. SA A D SD
23. I believe there could be little romance in this marriage. SA A D SD
24. I would be embarrassed to hear John call Jane "loving, pet names." SA A D SD
25. I don't think John should give special attention to young single women at parties. SA A D SD
26. John shows a healthy interest in sex if he reads Playboy. SA A D SD
27. Young couples should be able to have large church weddings. SA A D SD

Jane and John had dated for some months when they realized they had fallen in love. The two had found many shared interests during their courtship. In addition, both were exactly the same age of 41 and each had a previous marriage. Jane's middle-aged daughter from that other marriage objected strenuously to her mother's remarriage, but the elderly couple went ahead and got married anyway. Their large church wedding was attended by many relatives and friends. After Jane and John returned from a long honeymoon they moved into a large apartment complex.

The following statements tell more about Jane and John.

On each of these of their early marital adjustment experiences, please mark to each statement and circle the letters that most accurately describe your feelings about each statement. All replies are confidential.

SA = Strongly Agree  
 A = Agree  
 D = Disagree  
 SD = Strongly Disagree

\* These only are elderly respondents' questionnaires  
 \*\* See page Two

## Appendix B

Years of Education _____ (grade school 6, high school 12, etc.)	Age _____ Sex _____
Occupation (former)* _____	Married _____
Spouse's occupation (former)* _____	Single _____
	Widowed _____
	Divorced _____

Opinionnaire \*\*\*

We are conducting a research study in which we plan to learn more about the feelings of people concerning sexual expression in couples before they are married (and still "dating") and just after marriage while they are still considered "newlyweds." The following paragraph is about a couple we call "Jane and John." Please read it carefully:

Jane and John had dated for some months when they realized they had fallen in love. The two had found many shared interests during their courtship. In addition, both were exactly the same age of 65 and each had a previous marriage. Jane's middle-aged daughter from that other marriage objected strenuously to her mother's remarriage, but the elderly couple went ahead and got married anyway. Their large church wedding was attended by many relatives and friends. After Jane and John returned from a long honeymoon they moved into a large apartment complex.

The following statements tell more about Jane and John, as well as some of their early marital adjustment experiences. Please react to each statement and circle the letters that most accurately describe your feelings about each statement. All replies are confidential.

SA = Strongly Agree  
A = Agree  
D = Disagree  
SD = Strongly Disagree

\* Used only on elderly respondents' questionnaires  
\*\*\* Version Two

1. I think it was good for this pair to marry. SA A D SD
2. I would be embarrassed to see Jane and John kissing in public. SA A D SD
3. I believe Jane and John should have tried living together before marriage. SA A D SD
4. I believe elderly men like John are sinful if they visit massage parlors. SA A D SD
5. I would be pleased to see Jane and John out dancing "cheek to cheek." SA A D SD
6. I think new brides such as Jane should be able to wear see-through nightgowns. SA A D SD
7. Jane and John should have had a small private wedding. SA A D SD
8. I think Jane's middle-aged daughter was wrong in opposing her mother's remarriage. SA A D SD
9. It disgusts me to hear elderly men tell dirty jokes at parties. SA A D SD
10. John is probably sexually impotent. SA A D SD
11. I believe elderly couples should sleep in twin beds. SA A D SD
12. It is perfectly proper for Jane to go to "X"-rated movies. SA A D SD
13. Couples like Jane and John make me feel good when they kiss in front of other people. SA A D SD
14. I think this couple's sexual activity could be very satisfying. SA A D SD
15. I believe this elderly couple married just for companionship. SA A D SD
16. A double bed is the best sleeping arrangement for this couple. SA A D SD
17. It is in poor taste for John to hug Jane close to him when friends are present. SA A D SD
18. It was foolish for this couple to take a long honeymoon. SA A D SD

19. It bothers me to think of this elderly couple actually having sexual relations. SA A D SD
20. It sounds like this couple really married to experience a love relationship. SA A D SD
21. Jane should be ashamed if she attends "X"-rated movies. SA A D SD
22. Taking a long wedding trip was a fine thing for Jane and John to do. SA A D SD
23. I believe there could be little romance in this marriage. SA A D SD
24. I would be embarrassed to hear John call Jane "loving, pet names." SA A D SD
25. I don't think John should give special attention to young single women at parties. SA A D SD
26. John shows a healthy interest in sex if he reads Playboy. SA A D SD
27. Elderly couples should be able to have large church weddings. SA A D SD

## Appendix C

Rank Order of Mean Scores  
for Each Questionnaire Item  
(for both cases)

Young Respondents		Elderly Respondents	
Mean	Item	Mean	Item
2.9	3	3.7	3
2.7	*(26)21	3.5	9
2.6	*(25)20	3.3	*(25)20
2.4	8	3.2	7
2.3	9	3.2	12
2.2	*(20)16	2.8	*(26)21
2.0	12	2.8	4
2.0	7	2.5	6
1.9	*(23)18	2.4	2
1.9	4	2.4	*(17)14
1.8	1	2.4	*(27)22
1.8	6	2.3	11
1.7	5	2.3	5
1.7	10	2.1	*(24)19
1.7	*(27)22	2.1	*(23)18
1.6	11	2.1	*(22)17
1.6	*(14)13	2.0	10
1.6	*(22)17	1.9	*(20)16
1.6	*(24)19	1.8	*(14)13
1.5	*(17)14	1.7	*(19)15
1.5	2	1.7	8
1.4	*(19)15	1.7	1

\*Original item number in the questionnaire